

Fact Sheet

Public Safety Radio Strategic Planning Committee



THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE (PSRSPC) AND OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING COMMITTEES IN CALIFORNIA

Public Safety agency administrative personnel may not be familiar with the functions of the State of California's Public Safety Radio Strategic Planning Committee (PSRSPC) and other established Public Safety Communications Committees. This Fact Sheet is intended to provide a quick overview of the purpose of each, and show where they work together.

As background, the majority of public safety communications (user 'two-way' radios) operate in five 'bands' of spectrum allocated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for public safety use. These are:

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-----|
| • 30 to 50 MHz | ("VHF Low Band") | [1] |
| • 150 to 174 MHz | ("VHF High Band") | [2] |
| • 450 to 512 MHz | ("UHF Band") | [2] |
| • 764 to 806 MHz | ("700 MHz Band") | [3] |
| • 806 to 869 MHz | ("800 MHz Band") | |

Notes:

1. Equipment manufactures have greatly reduced the amount and types of communications equipment available for purchase in VHF Low Band, making operations of systems in this band difficult to maintain.
2. FCC Rules changes in the last ten years have led to a reorganization of the existing public safety spectrum in VHF High Band and the UHF Band. As a result, a number of planning and collaborative efforts are underway to adapt to these new FCC rules.
3. The 700 MHz Band is a new allocation of spectrum that is being transferred to public safety from the television broadcast industry. In the majority of California areas, this band will not be available for use until later this decade.

PSRSPC:

The State of California has twelve agencies operating public safety radio networks throughout the state. These networks have evolved over the last fifty years, on four of the five available bands, as agency-specific systems designed to meet the needs of that state agency and / or smaller state agencies under a shared use agreement.

Established in 2003 as a formal Committee by the California Legislature in Section 8592 et seq. of the Government Code, the PSRSPC has a defined membership consisting of the twelve state agencies operating public safety radio communications systems. The legislatively chartered purpose of the Committee is specified in section 8592.2(a):

8592.2. (a) The committee shall have primary responsibility in state government for developing and implementing a statewide integrated public safety communication system for state government agencies that facilitates interoperability and other shared uses of public safety spectrum with local and federal agencies, consistent with decisions and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission. In developing this system, the committee shall seek input from, and act as a liaison to, any regional planning committee or other federal, state, or local entity with responsibility for developing, operating, or monitoring interoperability of public safety spectrum.

The PSRSPC is also tasked to consult with specified professional associations, and to develop a model ‘memorandum of understanding’ format that sets forth general terms for interoperability or other shared uses among jurisdictions.

California Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (CALSIEC):

California has a lengthy history of successful collaboration between the various levels of government when it comes to public safety communications matters. Since the early 1960s, the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES) has provided oversight of field level Mutual Aid radio channels such as the CLEMARS channels for Law Enforcement use; the White channels for interagency Fire incident communications; and CALCORD for true at-scene inter-discipline coordination. Various committees within OES have developed the plans and procedures for these legacy interoperability channels.

Since 1987, at least three Public Safety-based Federal Advisory Committees to the FCC have recognized California’s successful implementation methodology for interoperability communications in their reports and recommendations. In an early 2001 Report & Order allocating the 700 MHz Band to Public Safety, the FCC requested each state establish a “State Interoperability Executive Committee” (SIEC) to administer the interoperability spectrum in that band on behalf of all of the public safety eligible entities within the state, and to advise the FCC as to the identity of the body that will perform these administrative functions. Earlier this summer, the FCC’s Public Safety National Coordinating Committee (NCC) recommended to the Commission that the FCC mandate the SIECs, and that the committee name be changed to “*Statewide* Interoperability Executive Committee” in order to reflect the all-inclusive nature of Interoperability (Local working with State and Federal responders).

OES is continuing California’s progressive outlook on Interoperability Communications in establishing CALSIEC using the NCC’s recommended models and practices. California has long recognized that responsibility for and command of an incident remains with the jurisdiction directly responsible for the venue of the incident, which in the vast majority of the emergencies and disasters in California is the local government. To recognize the broad diversity of local communications needs, local government will have the majority representation on CALSIEC, followed by the State agencies that support local government, and the Federal agencies that support State and Local.

CALSIEC will be responsible for the technical and operational procedures for all existing and planned Public Safety Interoperability frequencies in California. In fulfilling this role, the CALSIEC will replace both the CLEMARS Executive Committee and the OES Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEES (RPCs):

In 1987 when the FCC allocated an additional 6 MHz of spectrum to public safety in the 800 MHz Band, the FCC established 55 Regional Planning Committees (RPCs) around the country. California has two RPCs, one (Region 5) covering 10 counties of Southern California (South of the northernmost boundary of San Luis Obispo, Kern, and San Bernardino Counties), and the other (Region 6) covering the 48 counties of Central and Northern California. The RPCs were charged with developing an implementation and utilization plan for the new 6 MHz spectrum allocation. Each of the 55 Regional Plans was submitted to the FCC, placed on Public Notice, and approved. The frequency allocations in these plans then became part of the FCC Regulations by reference, and are living documents.

The FCC continued this methodology late in the 1990s with the introduction of the 700 MHz band. In this case, the RPCs are to manage the “General Use” spectrum in the 700 MHz band. FCC Region 5 has developed their plan and has submitted it to the FCC for approval. FCC Region 6 is in the process of surveying the public safety eligible agencies to obtain their requirements to be used in the development of the plan.

Earlier this year the FCC added the new 4.9 GHz wireless data band to the list of bands the RPCs will address. The RPCs are to develop plans for the new band, then administer its use.

LOCAL AND ‘REGIONAL’ PLANNING EFFORTS:

Throughout California, a number of local government-oriented planning efforts have developed in the last few years to address local concerns. These efforts typically address issues of local communications system consolidation (shared use of a common infrastructure on a day-to-day or an emergency basis), or the development of a multi-jurisdictional interoperability network.

The CALSIEC will work with each of these committees with particular attention to their plans for use of Mutual Aid and Interoperability frequencies and the PSRSPC will work with them with attention to the format of their shared use agreements with State agencies.

SUMMARY:

Each of these committees has specified goals and responsibilities. The PSRSPC will work with these groups when needed to achieve the PSRSPC’s charter from the legislature.

This information is current as of September 2003. For further information contact the Interoperability Programs Unit of OES Telecommunications on 916.845.8630 or email interop@oes.ca.gov